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THE ROYAL FEUD IN THE WADI HALFA TEMPLE: A REJOINDER

BY JAMES HENRY BREASTED
The University of Chicago

Three years ago Mr. Scott-Moncrieff, in the pages of the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*,¹ questioned the matters of fact regarding the records in the Wadi Halfa temple, which I had presented in my preliminary report on the work of the University of Chicago Expedition there. My reply² was confined strictly to the monument under discussion and to the accuracy of Mr. Scott-Moncrieff's examination of that monument as reported in his "notes." In his reply³ to my defense of our work, unable to offer anything in rebuttal, he introduces four entirely irrelevant monuments. Had he confined himself to the subject of this discussion, the Wadi Halfa temple, I should have been very glad to let the discussion terminate with his "reply": the more so as the very temperate tone in which my article was written and the freedom from offensive personality there observed have not been maintained in Mr. Scott-Moncrieff's "reply."

I. The first of these monuments is the Annals of "Thothmes III," as translated in my *Ancient Records*. Mr. Scott-Moncrieff has discovered that in my translation of five lines of these Annals (first campaign, ll. 7-11), I have made serious omissions—not less than nineteen words "in five consecutive lines at the opening of one of the most important historical inscriptions there is"! He adds that plenty of similar omissions in my translation of the Annals can be found, if the reader will compare it with Sethe's text. The reader should note two facts regarding this discovery by Mr. Scott-Moncrieff:

First, he bases this criticism of my *Ancient Records* on the edition of the Annals of "Thothmes III" by Sethe, *an edition which appeared over a year after my "Ancient Records" were published!*

¹ *Proceedings*, January, 1907, 39-46.

² *Ibid.*, November, 1909, 269-279.

³ *Ibid.*, December, 1909, 333-338.

Second. All of the "omissions" in my translation listed by Mr. Scott-Moncrieff are carefully indicated to the reader by me in the translation—a fact which Mr. Scott-Moncrieff fails to mention to his readers. Each such "omission" in the translation is due to a complete gap in the original hieroglyphic document due to time, wear, or vandalism. Sethe, endeavoring to fill these gaps on the wall, has inserted *editorial restorations—restorations carefully indicated by him as such by means of enclosing brackets*. Not a trace of the restored words so inserted exists on the original wall, but they are *in toto* conjectural insertions. It is the "omission" of these inserted and bracketed restorations of the original which Mr. Scott-Moncrieff gravely lays to my charge!⁴

But my critic's keen eye goes still farther, for he discovers that I have even omitted a whole passage. He states that (p. 336) "the first six lines are omitted." We may put these six lines in the same limbo with the reliefs on the north wall of the Halfa temple; they are invisible only to the eyes of Mr. Scott-Moncrieff, for they are duly translated in the introduction to the Annals, where they belong (p. 175), and where he might have found them by turning two leaves. I leave it to the reader whether such criticism discloses errors in my translation or the capacity of the critic in the use of such materials. Mr. Scott-Moncrieff complains of the "grossly unfair" way in which he has been treated. There are evidently divers ways of showing unfairness.

II. The second irrelevant monument which Mr. Scott-Moncrieff has introduced into the discussion is the stele of "Thetha," in my translation⁵ of which, he says he does not find it "difficult to detect similar errors." These errors consist of four examples of "omission." Upon turning to the translation as published, however, the reader finds that *in every case every such "omission" was carefully called to the attention of the reader*, a fact which Mr. Scott-Moncrieff studiously

⁴ Once also I am accused of mistranslating where I had myself ventured a conjecture as to the lost content of the gap, a conjecture which differs from that of Sethe. In l. 7, Mr. Scott-Moncrieff declares also that two words are "mistranslated." There are six words preserved in the line, viz., *T'rw m wdy't tpy't nt nbt* (*ṯaru em ulit tepet net nekht*) which I have rendered: "[his majesty was in] Tharu on the first victorious expedition." To express "victorious," the Egyptian uses a genitive, "of victory"; and I suppose these are the "two words" I have "mistranslated" as "victorious."

⁵ *American Journal of Sem. Lang.*, XXI, 163-165.

refrains from mentioning to his readers. The reasons for these omissions in the translation were the obscurity and the difficulty of the text; and the omissions were deliberately and intentionally made. Such intentional omissions in translations will be found in the works of every living orientalist, and the more numerous they are the more does the translator indicate his caution.⁶ Similar omissions will be found in Mr. Scott-Moncrieff's translation of the inscription of "Thothmes III" from the Wadi Halfa temple, and in the very reply containing the above criticisms, he openly says he "translated whatever portion he chose, in no way claiming" to furnish "a complete translation"! The text of the stele of "Thetha" was copied very hastily by a student of mine at a period so early in his studies that he copied it backward without knowing it. Naturally I placed no great dependence upon his copy, though it was a very creditable performance for one so inexperienced. When a scholar's intentional omissions, carefully indicated to the reader in each case—omissions such as Mr. Scott-Moncrieff himself states he made in his own translation of the Wadi Halfa inscription—are misrepresented to the readers of the *Proceedings* as "errors," in order to produce an impression of wholesale inaccuracy, the serious moral question involved is not eliminated by the preposterous absurdity of the whole affair.

III. Mr. Scott-Moncrieff also introduces, as a third irrelevant monument, the inscription of Ahmose of El Kab on which he says that "I insisted that the siege of Sharuhén lasted six years and not three." "The old reading of three years," he continues, "is shown to be correct by Professor Sethe." This statement is as exact as Mr. Scott-Moncrieff's "notes" on the temple of Wadi Halfa. There is not and there never has been any "old reading of three years." There was a reading of *five* years in Lepsius' text—a text which, because of its general accuracy, has been commonly accepted in this particular. *The correction of Lepsius' reading was not mine*, but was drawn from Champollion, who gives six. I naturally consulted the Berlin squeeze to determine whether Champollion might

⁶ They are even found in modern translations of the Old Testament, as in Cheyne's version of the fifty-second chapter of Isaiah, where he omits the difficult word usually rendered "sprinkle" (יִסְרֹק, vs. 14), but indicates the omission by means of a star, just as I indicated the omissions in the "Thetha" text.

be right, and sure enough I found six strokes on the squeeze of Lepsius. The squeeze was over sixty years old and naturally very much worn. However, Sethe's examination of the original also showed six strokes, precisely as I read the squeeze, but the original showed them arranged in two groups of three strokes each—one group close together, the other group with the strokes spread apart and longer. Sethe concluded that the first three are the plural strokes and the second three are to be read as a numeral. But the actual number of strokes was not altered by Sethe's interpretation; and the correction which Mr. Scott-Moncrieff attributes to me was due to Champollion.

IV. The fourth irrelevant monument introduced by Mr Scott-Moncrieff is my translation of the inscription of Si-Hathor in the British Museum, in which I have corrected to sixteen the numeral fifteen in the ancient text of Sharpe and Birch. Naturally any scholar would appeal from a text of the early days of Egyptology to the original if possible. I reported what I saw. Mr. Scott-Moncrieff has examined the monument *ad hoc*. Having been separated from my papers in America by years of absence from home, I am not able to put my hand upon my copy of the monument. I have no photograph to check Mr. Scott-Moncrieff's reading, and judging from his readings at Wadi Halfa such corroboration of his copies is very necessary, but I am quite ready to admit that he *may* be right. Assuming that he *is* so, his formidable list of errors, compiled with much labor, from far and near, reduces to *one*. The question at once arises: what has this one *possible* error to do with the facts observable in the Wadi Halfa temple? I have no desire to reopen that discussion, but one or two further comments ought to be made on the controversy.

Mr. Scott-Moncrieff complains that a contribution which he headed "Some notes, etc." was assailed by me as a "report" intended to be exhaustive. He made his "notes" the basis for casting serious doubt on important matters of fact in the Halfa temple as communicated in my preliminary report, and then complains because his "notes" were accepted seriously and shown to be unreliable. The question at once arises: why make observations admittedly not to be taken seriously the basis for throwing doubt on the observations of others?

With regard to the north wall where so much of the important evidence in this temple is observable, Mr. Scott-Moncrieff now further states that according to his observation the specimen relief from this wall which I published in the *Proceedings* (November, 1909, Pl. XXXVIII) "is the only easily recognizable relief that exists on that wall"; and he adds that I have been unjust in "the selection of this *one* photograph" as representative of the wall as a whole. I repeat what I first said in my reply to Mr. Scott-Moncrieff's criticism: "This north wall contains eight relief scenes occupying its entire length and still in a very good state of preservation." Indeed, the reliefs are in an admirable state of preservation, and I have forwarded to the editor of the *Proceedings* blue-prints of all the eight reliefs. These photographs show that the entire length of the wall is still covered with reliefs, which, with one exception, are all as clear as the one published in the *Proceedings*, while several of them are clearer. Hence I reiterate that an examination that did not perceive this is insufficient to determine the historical data discernible in this temple.

With reference to the changes in the wall, Mr. Scott-Moncrieff has entirely shifted his ground since writing his "notes." He now says, "I am as well aware as Professor Breasted that the reliefs have been tampered with, and so far as I can recollect in every case where a block has been reset, or a niche left, the place so rearranged has borne a relief representing the king" (*italics mine*). Such is his present statement. In his "notes" he had said, "And even supposing that Professor Breasted were correct about the alteration of the blocks, it would be interesting to have his proof that the stones excised (as he thinks) bore the name and figure of Hatshepsut, or indeed of anybody else" (*italics mine*). It is evident that in his "notes" he regarded "the alteration of the blocks" as an improbable theory of mine which he did not share, and as to the *reliefs*, the less said the better.

Again, referring to the inscription of "Thothmes III," Mr. Scott-Moncrieff now says it "is a difficult one to read, being in a bad light and always in the shadow." I cannot understand this. I never saw an inscription better lighted. It stands open to the sky all day long. Furthermore, the inscription receives the full sunshine shortly after twelve o'clock and for some time during the remainder of the

day. This may be seen by examining Mr. Scott-Moncrieff's own plan, where he indicates the inscription by the letter "S" on the west side of the square pillar in the court. My photograph of it, published in the *Proceedings*, I took by sunlight, as it was shining on the entire document.

Finally, I regret very much Mr. Scott-Moncrieff's evident sense of injury because I referred *in a footnote* to the unfortunate cement plastering which now covers the lower portion of the inscription. I was very careful to make the statement impersonal, so as not to indicate that this plastering had been done at his positive orders, but that it had happened while his repairs were going on. These repairs were executed in October and November of 1905 (*Proceedings*, January, 1907, 39). I arrived at the temple early in January, 1906. As the "Thothmes III" inscription is the most important historical inscription in the temple, I examined it at once and found it as indicated in my photograph in the *Proceedings* (November, 1909, Pl. XXXIX). A few days later, being in the Government office at Halfa, I met Mr. Iles, representing Captain Morant, Governor of the Halfa Province, then absent; and I inquired of Mr. Iles who had made the repairs on the temple. I learned then from him for the first time that they had been done by Mr. Scott-Moncrieff. The *ghafir* at the temple had already stated that it was Mr. Scott-Moncrieff, but I had not before been able to understand his pronunciation of the name, as the Arabs are notably unable to pronounce European proper names. No repairs by anybody else during the few weeks intervening between Mr. Scott-Moncrieff's work and our arrival were mentioned. Neither has any report of repairs by anyone else ever been published. I could only conclude that the repairs on the pillar bearing the "Thothmes III" inscription had been executed by Mr. Scott-Moncrieff. I am still completely at a loss to understand how the repairs could have been executed by anybody else, but I wish to be entirely unequivocal. If Mr. Scott-Moncrieff categorically denies, as he does, that this plastering was done during his repairs, I accept his statement unconditionally, and I hasten to express my sincere regret that his very laudable efforts to preserve the Wadi Halfa temple should have been in any way reflected upon by me. And I should like to add that but for the doubt which he cast in his

"notes" upon our report of the facts observed in the Halfa temple, doubt which unavoidably involved the reproduction of this inscription, it would have been a matter to which I should never have referred.

All this is a small matter, however, when compared with the method of misrepresentation which Mr. Scott-Moncrieff has since seen fit to adopt. I called the attention of the editor of the *Proceedings* to these misrepresentations by Mr. Scott-Moncrieff and forwarded a brief statement of the facts without any personalities, for publication in the *Proceedings*; but this correction, not of error, but of misrepresentation, was refused, on the ground that no more space could be given to the matter. That is, space was granted in the *Proceedings* for deliberate misrepresentation, but all opportunity for correction was refused.